



# JACK DOYLE

## MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release:**  
**Friday, April 11, 2003**

### **DOYLE ANNOUNCES \$18.8 MILLION IN SAVINGS DUE TO THE REFORM OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*Monroe County Has Already Achieved 62.2% Of Its \$30 Million Goal*

Monroe County Executive **Jack Doyle** today provided the community with a status report regarding the ongoing reforms within the Department of Human and Health Services (H&HS). Doyle announced that County taxpayers have already saved \$18.8 million, due to the effort entitled "Operation Transform." The initiative is already 62.2% of the way to its goal of \$30.2 million in 2003. Medicaid case closures, contract reductions, improved supervision of "at risk" youth and lower administrative costs comprise the majority of the savings.

"We're already nearly two-thirds of the way to our goal of \$30.2 million for 2003, and we're only a quarter of the way through the year," said Doyle. "This report shows that the savings due to Operation Transform are real and making a difference for County taxpayers. We're well on our way to saving the \$30 million, something our critics said we'd never do."

***\*\*\*Please refer to attached chart for a complete list of the savings from Operation Transform\*\*\****

Doyle highlighted a number of "Operation Transform" accomplishments. Over 2,200 Medicaid cases have been closed through enhanced recertification and fraud detection efforts, saving \$5 million. Recertification is the process by which recipients' eligibility is reexamined to determine that they still meet the program's income requirements. In addition, H&HS assisted 637 Temporary Assistance applicants in finding jobs so far this year – eliminating their need for welfare benefits before their cases were opened, saving nearly \$900,000. Another 241 applicants were denied benefits for failing to seek employment, saving \$325,000.

***-more-***

## *\$18.2 Million In Savings*

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“The number of people finding jobs through H&HS is due to our new directed job search program, where we link those in need with employers who have jobs available,” said Doyle. “This type of innovative thinking is overhauling a system that was stuck in the 1960’s, and improving the lives of families in need at the same time.”

While Doyle stressed that the changes at H&HS, and the savings generated, were significant, Monroe County still faces tremendous budgetary pressures due to mandates, including Medicaid and Safety Net. Applications for Medicaid were up by 1,079 or 33% in March compared to the same month last year. A portion of this increase is related to the expansion of the eligibility requirements for New York State’s Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus programs, and the continued weakness in the state and local economy.

“Medicaid continues to expand piece by piece through these programs at a great cost to counties,” said Doyle. “We’re doing everything we can to control the cost of these programs, but we don’t decide who can apply and who’s eligible. We just pay the bills.”

Doyle also criticized new rules that prevent H&HS from conducting face-to-face interviews with Medicaid recipients during the recertification process.

“It’s only fair that our caseworkers get the opportunity to verify the income of someone receiving assistance face-to-face. We want to make sure that tax dollars aren’t wasted on someone who can afford to help themselves,” said Doyle.

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